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THE DIRECTOR OF
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

27

National Intelligence Council

4 February 1985

NOTE FOR: George A. Keyworth

FROM: Herbert E. Meyer
Vice Chairman, National Intelligence
Council

This from the DCM in London, who got the
job after a tour as Executive Assistant to
the Secretary of State. Note especially
paragraphs 7 and 8.

HEM

Herbert E. Meyer

Attachment:
Cable (LONDON 02273)

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EXDIS

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PARM, UK, NATO
SUBJECT: CONSENSUS BUILDING ON SDI

REFS: A) MOSCOW 1055, B) ROME 2085, C) TOKYO
1991, D) PARIS 3249

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: ALLIED AGREEMENT ON A FEW BRIEF AND
PERSUASIVE POLICY POINTS COULD PRESERVE OUR
FLEXIBILITY ON SDI, HELP OUR FRIENDS GUARD THEIR
POLITICAL FLANKS, AND FRUSTRATE SOVIET
MISCHIEF-MAKING. AN APPROACH BASED ON THE
PRINCIPLES DISCUSSED BY THATCHER AND THE PRESIDENT
AT CAMP DAVID SEEM TO US A SOLID BASIS FOR THIS
KIND OF ATLANTIC CONSENSUS. END SUMMARY.

THE SDI DEBATE IS MORE BALANCED BUT STILL NEGATIVE

3. SEEN FROM HERE, THE DEBATE ON SDI IN EUROPE
IS STILL LARGELY NEGATIVE -- BUT BETTER THAN IT
WAS. CRITICS NO LONGER HAVE THE FIELD TO
THEMSELVES, MANY BELIEVE THAT SDI BROUGHT THE
SOVIETS BACK TO THE TABLE, AND SOME EVEN
ACKNOWLEDGE THE VIRTUES OF A MISSILE DEFENSE -- AS
LONG AS IT LEAVES DETERRENCE INTACT.

4. IN WHITEHALL, TOO, WE FIND MORE WILLINGNESS
TO ADMIT THAT THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE HAS
BROUGHT TACTICAL GAINS. THE BREADTH AND EXTENT OF
OUR CONSULTATIONS (E.G. MACFARLANE'S VISIT HERE)
HAVE HELPED ENORMOUSLY

BUT DOUBTS ARE BASIC: WOULD SDI UNDERMINE
DETERRENCE?

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5. THATCHER, FOR EXAMPLE, SUPPORTS SDI RESEARCH AND IS KEENLY AWARE OF SOVIET PROGRAMS. BUT CONSULTATION HAS NOT CHANGED HER VIEW THAT FULL-SCALE DEVELOPMENT WOULD BRING NO LASTING BENEFITS AND COULD SPELL TROUBLE FOR EUROPE -- LEAVING EUROPEANS MORE RATHER THAN LESS VULNERABLE TO THE SOVIETS. WHEN THATCHER SAYS (AS SHE OFTEN DOES) THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS HAVE KEPT THE PEACE, SHE EXPRESSES A VIEW WIDELY SHARED ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM -- EVEN, CLANDESTINELY, WITHIN THE BRITISH LABOR PARTY.

THE POTENTIAL FOR SPLITS -- AND NEED FOR COMMON GROUND

6. OUR PROBLEM IS THAT THIS VIEW OF THE NEED FOR NUCLEAR DETERRENCE -- DEEPLY INGRAINED IN EUROPE -- IS AT ODDS WITH SOME OF THE BROADER DEFINITIONS OF WHAT SDI IS AND WHAT IT WILL DO. THE SOVIETS DOUBTLESS UNDERSTAND THIS. SO WE TAKE SERIOUSLY THE POTENTIAL DAMAGE OF A MAJOR SOVIET CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT SDI AND CAST IT AS A BAR TO ARMS CONTROL (REF A). WE ALREADY SEE EVIDENCE OF THIS NEW "STRUGGLE FOR PEACE" CREEPING INTO THE BRITISH MEDIA.

7. ACCORDINGLY, THE TASK IS TO FIND A PUBLIC FORMULA WHICH 1) PROTECTS OUR FLEXIBILITY TO MOVE FORWARD ON SDI, 2) ANSWERS THE SUBSTANTIVE CONCERNS IN EUROPE, AND 3) GIVES OUR FRIENDS AMMUNITION TO DEFEND SDI PUBLICLY AGAINST A SOVIET CAMPAIGN TO UNDERMINE IT.

THE CAMP DAVID POINTS: A FRAMEWORK FOR CONSENSUS

8. THE DECEMBER 22 CAMP DAVID POINTS SEEM TO US TO PROVIDE THAT SORT OF FORMULA. AS UNDERSTOOD BY THE BRITISH, THEY SET THE FOLLOWING PARAMETERS FOR SDI.

--THE AIM IS BALANCE, NOT SUPERIORITY

--SDI-RELATED DEPLOYMENT WOULD, IN VIEW OF TREATY OBLIGATIONS, BE A MATTER FOR NEGOTIATION

--THE GOAL IS TO ENHANCE DETERRENCE

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--NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD ENHANCE SECURITY AND REDUCE LEVELS OF OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS ON BOTH SIDES.

9. FROM A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE THE POINTS TAKEN TOGETHER ARE A STATEMENT OF POLITICAL NECESSITY: NO EUROPEAN LEADER COULD AFFORD TO SUPPORT A POLICY WHICH AIMED AT SUPERIORITY, ESCHEWED NEGOTIATION, OR UNDERCUT DETERRENCE. ARGUABLY, INDEED, THE FOUR POINTS REFLECT A MINIMUM BASIS FOR ATLANTIC CONSENSUS ON SDI.

10. WE HAVE A BREATHING SPACE NOW TO PUT CONSENSUS FIRMLY IN PLACE. OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES ARE STILL

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ABLE TO FINESSE THE SDI ISSUE, IN PART BECAUSE PARLIAMENTS AND PUBLICS ARE NOT YET FULLY ENGAGED, IN PART BECAUSE OF AN ASSUMPTION OF U.S. WILLINGNESS TO RESPECT THE ABM TREATY AND TO NEGOTIATE BEFORE DEPLOYMENT (VIZ. DUMAS' CONVERSATION WITH DANOVI REF B).

11. BUT THAT HAPPY CIRCUMSTANCE COULD END SWIFTLY ONCE THE SOVIET COUNTER-CAMPAIGN IS IN FULL SWING -- ESPECIALLY IF OUR COMMITMENT TO NEGOTIATION COMES TO BE DOUBTED. THEN, THE IMPLICIT DIFFERENCES IN ATLANTIC PERCEPTIONS ON SDI COULD COME TO HAUNT US -- UNLESS WE HAVE PREPARED OUR DEFENSE IN ADVANCE.

12. ACCORDINGLY, WE RECOMMEND THAT OUR PUBLIC CAMPAIGN IN EUROPE PICK UP ON THE APPROACH TO SDI SKETCHED OUT BY THATCHER AND THE PRESIDENT. THE SUMMIT, NAC AND DPC COMMUNIQUE GIVE US A CHANCE TO MAKE SUCH AN APPROACH CLEAR TO EUROPEAN PUBLICS -- EMPHASIZING THE ASPECTS OF SDI ON WHICH WE AND OUR ALLIES AGREE, AND GIVING ALLIED LEADERS A REDOUBT FROM WHICH TO DEFEND THEMSELVES AGAINST THE INEVITABLE ANTI-SDI AGITATION TO COME.
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END OF MESSAGE

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